

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. **(Currently Amended)** A vehicle door outer handle system comprising:

an operating handle **[(14)]** comprising a handle main body **[(22)]** made of a synthetic resin and a cover **[(23)]** made of a synthetic resin so as to cover the outer side of the handle main body **[(22)]**, the operating handle **[(14)]** being disposed on an outer side of a vehicle door **[(11)]**;

a pair of electrodes **[(43)]**; and

a circuit board **[(44)]** on which is provided a detection circuit **[(45)]** for detecting a change in capacitance between the electrodes **[(43)]**, the electrodes **[(43)]** and the circuit board **[(44)]** being housed within the operating handle, (14);
~~characterized in that~~

wherein the electrodes **[(43)]** are patterned on the circuit board **[(44)]**.

2. **(Currently Amended)** The vehicle door outer handle system according to Claim 1 wherein, among opposite faces of the circuit board **[(44)]**, a component **[(45a, 45b, 45c)]** of the detection circuit **[(45)]** is mounted on the face on the side opposite to the face where the electrodes **[(43)]** are patterned.

3. **(Currently Amended)** The vehicle door outer handle system according to either Claim 1 or 2, wherein, among opposite faces of the circuit board **[(44)]**, the electrodes **[(43)]** are patterned on the face on the vehicle side.

4. **(Currently Amended)** The vehicle door outer handle system according to Claim 1, wherein a sensor unit [(42)] comprising the electrodes [(43)], the circuit board [(44)], and a covering portion [(48)] made of a synthetic resin and covering the electrodes [(43)] and the circuit board [(44)] is fixedly housed in a housing recess [(41)] formed in the handle main body [(22)] so as to open on the cover [(23)] side.

5. **(Currently Amended)** The vehicle door outer handle system according to Claim 4, wherein the electrodes [(43)] and the circuit board [(44)] are mounted on a holder [(46)], a majority of the holder [(46)] being covered by the covering portion [(48)] so as to form a part of the sensor unit [(42)].

6. **(Currently Amended)** The vehicle door outer handle system according to Claim 5, wherein a ground plate [(47)] forming a part of the sensor unit [(42)] is mounted on the holder [(46)] so as to cover the electrodes [(43)] and is covered by the covering portion [(48)].

7. **(Currently Amended)** The vehicle door outer handle system according to Claim 5, wherein a portion of the holder [(46)] projecting from the covering portion [(48)] is mounted on a mounting seat [(63, 64)] provided on the handle main body [(22)].

8. **(Currently Amended)** The vehicle door outer handle system according to Claim 4, wherein the electrodes [(43)] and the circuit board [(44)] are mounted on a holder [(46)], and a portion of the holder [(46)] projects from the covering portion [(48)] and is mounted on the mounting seat [(63, 64)] provided on the handle main body [(22)].